CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter attempts to discuss the possible effects of the employment of mothers on the children. The differences of working and nonworking mothers' children on the eight personality factors under different variables have been reported in an earlier chapter.

The results of this study showed no significant differences between working mothers' children and nonworking mothers' children on each of the eight personality factors, social ascendance, personal responsibility, social effectiveness, introvertive self-sufficiency, personal attractiveness, personal security and stability, compulsive domination and dependability. Mothers' outside employment as such didn't show any significant effect on their children's personality. This may be due to the accepted tradition of Khasi mothers going to work, many of the problems may be lightened. The children may be finding their own position to be the same as many of their fellows and may not likely to feel that they are missing something.

The earlier studies of employed mothers in the United States compiled together by Nye and Hoffman (1963), Study by Feguson & Cunnison (1951), Scott's study (1965), Kimball (1978), Alison Clarke-Stewart (1977), Lazarus (1961) and Stoltz (1960) show that there were no differences on the average in personality factors between children of mothers who work outside
the home and children of mothers who do not work outside the home. Yudkin & Holme (1969) quote Cartwright & Jeffereys' study which also showed no differences in general in matters such as self-confidence, cooperativeness, sociability etc., between working and nonworking mothers' children. Howell (1973) after surveying 300 studies says that there were almost no constant differences found between the children of employed and non-employed mothers.

In India, Kapur's study (1970), the findings of Ranade & Ramachandran (1970), Barot (1972), Srivastava (1972), Dhingra (1972) and some surveys conducted by various magazines (Dharmayug, 1968 and Eve's Weekly, 1973) all prove that mothers' employment as such does not influence the lives of children and does not affect their personality development.

The studies cited provide evidences that maternal employment by itself is not related to personality development.

Rapaport's Survey (quoted by Hann 1976) also had the same result. In India Roy's (1964) and Goswami's (1986) studies also indicated certain advantages like less delinquency, more affection, more cooperativeness etc. in working mothers' children.

There are some other studies which showed negative effect on children whose mothers work outside. They include Locksley (1980), Bowlby (1952), Pawar (1959), Ved (1960), Desai & Oke (1957), Manocha (1977), Jayalakshmi (1980), Rajalakshmi (1961) and Vasantha Kumar's (1964) studies which indicated rather injurious influence of mothers going to work on the personality of their children.

When comparison was made between the two sexes of children, there was no significant difference between working and nonworking mothers' children on any of the eight personality factors. This shows that there was no difference between working mothers' boys and girls when compared with non-working mothers' boys and girls.

and Manocha (1977) which reported differences in boys and girls of working and nonworking mothers. Most of these researchers found that mothers’ work had an advantageous effect on daughters but a negative effect on her sons. This dissimilarity in results may be due to the differences in the social system from which the sample of children were drawn. In the present study the children belonged to the matrilineal system. As the families in most other parts are patriarchal, the majority of the studies conducted earlier were on children from such families. In these families it is probable that the facts like special privileges of boys and disadvantages suffered by girls are continually fed on to the growing child, and hence their entire upbringing and personality development are influenced by such value orientation. The socio-psychological facts of matrilineal societies are different from the above pattern.

When comparison was made between working and nonworking mothers’ children belonging to different family structures, there was no significant difference on any of the eight personality factors. This shows that there was no significant difference between the working and nonworking mothers’ children from nuclear and joint families.

This finding did not support the findings of Clausen (1966), Sinha (1982), Whiting (1961) and Gore (1978) who found that nuclear family atmosphere encourages independence and individuality in a child on account of its more permissive atmosphere. The research results found in this study also did
not agree with Jayaswal (1976), Thomas (1976) and Singh's (1980) studies reporting advantages for personality development in children from joint families.

When comparison was made between the children with working and nonworking mothers of different age groups there was no significant difference between the children of working and nonworking mothers aged 20-29 years, 30-39 years and 40 and above age group on any of the eight personality factors compared.

This finding is somewhat different from the findings of Hurlock (1978, 1983) indicating differences between the children with mothers of different age groups.

Clarke (1977), Goode (1964), Hoffman (1974), Freud and Burlingham (1961), Bossard & Boll (1966) and Rabin's (1957) study with Kibbutz versus home-reared children report that young children are more susceptible than older children to damaging effects of separation from mothers. So also the findings of Hann (1976), which indicate that older children as compared to younger children gain materially and psychologically when both parents work. This tendency was also found by Woods (1972), and Jersild, Telford and Sawrey (1975) who found that working mothers older children achieved better social adjustment. But in the present study there was no significant difference between working and nonworking mothers' children from three different age groups, i.e. 4-5 years, 6-8
years and 9-10 years, on any of the eight personality factors studied. The finding is somewhat similar to the results obtained by Kimball (1978) who compared adjustment problems of young children of paid and nonpaid mothers and found no differences.

According to Sewell (1964) there is a growing body of evidence from empirical studies of several types indicating difference between the position of the child in the stratification system and some aspects of personality, including measured personality adjustment. The attitudes and values that are associated with various social-class levels generate parental behaviour that affects children's development in several ways (Watson & Lindgren, 1973). Melvin L. Kohn's Study and the Study by Kagan & Freeman (1963) yielded some data that throw light on this problem.

The present study showed significant difference on factor D between working and nonworking mothers' children from only the SES Class II families representing broadly the middle class. The working mothers' children showed a more positive oriented personality disposition. They had favourable qualities like social ease, friendly behaviour and social sensitivity which shows spontaneous, natural and unaffected behaviour with cooperative and leadership qualities. Probably when middle class mothers take up work, they may be feeling a greater responsibility for making up for their absence, by better organization, by consciously planning to be with their children,
or anticipating and preventing difficulties in their children's life. Indepth interviews also indicated this. When middle class mothers work, they usually are in a position to arrange reliable care best for their children. The advantage of working mothers' children may be because of a much wider area of social interaction of their mothers which provides them with different kinds of situations and people. Studies by Goode (1964), Maccoby (1961), Essig and Morgan (1961), Pavenstedt (1965) and Wortis and Associates (1963) also support these conclusions.

However, the findings of Sewell & Haller (1959), Drucker & Remmers (1952), Sims (1954), Stott (1945a, 1945b), Gough (1946), Hoffeditz (1934), Mintzer & Sargent (1939), Patterson (1943), and Auld (1952b) showed that children of lower economic status experiences more frustration and more personality problems. As an explanation they say that mothers from low class families react by the needs of the moment rather than by any clear long term plan about how to bring up children and how to train them to engage in the kind of behaviour that the parents regard as acceptable or desirable.

The child's ordinal position in the family is also often thought to be important in shaping his personality (Hurllock, 1983; Mussen & Kagan, 1974; & Helen Koch, 1955). The quality as well as the quantity of parent-child interaction varies with birth order. Considerable evidence has been accumulated showing that firstborn children differ in significant ways from laterborn children.
But the present study showed no significant differences between the working and nonworking mothers' first, middle and last children on all the personality factors. This is different from the findings of Watson & Lindgren (1973), McDonald (1969a, b), McArther (1956), Rothbart (1967), Altus (1971), Clarke (1977), Mavis & Ross (1975), Koch (1955), Craig (1976), Elkind, Irving B. Weiner (1978), Hetherington & Parke (1975), Baughman (1965) and Mussen & Kagan (1974) who found favourable results with firstborn children. Their argument is that parents with firstborn children having smaller families may be spending more time with their children, taking them out and meeting other people which makes them favourable on personality factors than the other children. But Adler (1930), Rank (1929), Hurlock (1983), Lasko (1984), Dean (1947) and Desai (1975) indicated favourable results in the case of middle and lastborn children. According to them parents of the firstborns indulge the children too much that it takes more time for them to adjust to the different role models and they tend to become dependent.

The size of the family influences the personality pattern both directly and indirectly (Hurlock, 1983; Simms and Simms, 1969; Clarke, 1977; Bossard & Boll, 1966; Brim, 1958; Clausen, 1966; Fauls & Smith, 1956; Freeberg & Payne, 1957; and Maynord, 1970).

In the present study in personality factor D, there was significant difference between the children of working
and nonworking mothers from more than 3 children families. Mothers' responses also show that with the increase in the number of children there was an increase in the percentage of work preference outside the home by mothers. But there were no significant differences between the other groups of children from working and nonworking mothers. This study seems to support the conclusions of Maccoby (1961) and Mavis & Ross (1975). But it is contrary to the studies of Hurlock (1983), Simms & Simms (1969), Hetherington & Parke (1975), Nuttall & Nuttall (1971), Weinberg (1971) and Lieberman (1973) who found that children from small families are independent and had better personal and social adjustments.

In large families the child gets chance to interact more with brothers and sisters, the affectional relationship between mother and child will be less intense and so the child may not be suffering due to his mother's work outside. In large families when the mother is away, the older children in the family take care of younger children and as a result the younger children may not probably so much miss their mother. Mothers' responses also indicate that less percentage of mothers left home before the children left for school from more than three children families. These may explain the results found among children of working mothers from large families.

A number of questions on mothers going out to work or staying at home as the case may be, were answered in response
to questions put in the questionnaire and during the interview of a small sample of mothers. The percentage distribution of responses given by the working mothers in this study stating reasons of employment shows that mothers, essentially worked for financial benefits. In a similar study Kapur (1972) also concluded that 34% of the working women in his sample took to jobs to raise the standard of living or to supplement their husbands' insufficient income. Klein's study (1965, pp.36-37) also found that seventy-three per cent women worked for money. The Bombay (Ramachandran, 1964) and Jodhpur (Talwar, 1984) studies also mentioned that a large proportion of working women took up jobs for economic reasons (69%, 65% and 77.5% respectively). Carl Rosenfeld and Perrella (1965) present data saying that 42% in their study gave financial need as their reason for joining some work. In the case of women whose husbands' incomes were relatively low, need for more money was stated as an important reason for taking up work (Baker et al, 1980, p.129).

More than half the sample of mothers in this study preferred to continue their work even with comfortable financial condition. In Blumberg & Dwaraki's study in Bangalore (1980, p. 94) where it was asked whether or not the working woman would prefer to work if there was no financial need, 85% responded affirmatively. It is noteworthy that even among those who give financial need as their reason for working, most said
that they would not stop working (Farree, 1976; Rosenfeld and Perrella, 1965). According to Viola Klein (1960) and also in the study in Bermondsey (1960), for most women the aim was a higher standard of living for their families than for the necessities of life. Kapur (1970, p. 395) reported that educated women take up jobs not only out of sheer economic necessity but also out of various other socio-psycho situational reasons. According to Yudkin and Holme (1969, p. 51) "a mother who had been trained for a profession or some other highly skilled occupation often wants to continue in or seek outside employment because of a liking for the job itself or by a sense of vocation". The more education and training a woman has, the more likely she is to give personal satisfaction rather than need as her reason for being employed (Baker et al, 1980, p.130).

In the present study preference of work may also be related to the matrilineal social system in which majority of Khasi women work outside.

In this study working and nonworking mothers from nuclear families were more tired of work outside and at home respectively than mothers from joint families. This may be because of sharing of housework in joint families than in nuclear families. More mothers from joint families wanted to continue their work even though they preferred housewife role. Working mothers of 20-29 years age group preferred housewife role as they were more tired than the other groups and 40 and
above age group mothers preferred career woman role and wanted to continue their work. This shows a relation between mothers' age and preference of work outside the home. In the case of nonworking mothers those from 40 and above age group preferred the housewife role. This can be inferred from their responses that they enjoyed the work. Most of the mothers from 40 and above age group enjoyed their work whether outside or at home.

Working mothers with older children wanted to continue their work because they enjoyed their work outside and were more aware of the dual responsibility. But they were the most tired mothers with outside work when compared with mothers from other groups. This may be because of many other children at home. In Talwar's study (1984, p.172) also a little more than three-fourths of the working women felt over tired with outside work. But when the responses were divided according to children's age, the results were different to the present study which shows working mothers with small children were more tired. Blumberg and Dwaraki's study (1980, p. 95) agrees with this study on working women. 67% of the working women in their study felt outside work very tiring, while 33% of them expressed opposite opinion.

Mothers' preference for work decreased in the case of SES Class I families with comfortable financial position. More mothers from Class II families preferred career woman role as more mothers were aware of the dual responsibility and also
they enjoyed their outside work. Indepth interviews with working mothers also showed that they were aware of the dual responsibilities at home and outside. Usually by better organisation of the work at home, by allotting duties to the children and husband, they were able to manage the work at home. Working mothers from class III families were the most tired when compared with other groups of mothers. These results also support the earlier findings of Talwar (1984) which indicated that among those who felt tired, the unskilled workers constituted the largest section. In this study the nonworking mothers from class I families were the most tired, which seems to support the conclusions of Blumberg and Dwaraki (1980) which showed over 70% of the mothers at home expressed dissatisfaction with their current status and stated that they would prefer to work.

Working mothers with firstborn children and nonworking mothers with middleborn children were the most tired ones with work outside or at home. But working and nonworking mothers with lastborn children enjoyed their work more. Working and nonworking mothers with more children preferred housewife role. But working mothers wanted to continue their work even with comfortable financial condition. Working and nonworking mothers from only child families enjoyed more as they were not tired with work at home or outside.

Most of the working mothers thought that their outside work affected their children. But the personality checklist
results were different showing no significant difference between the working and nonworking mothers' children. This indicates that on the whole mothers' work has no effect on their children. More mothers from 20-29 years age group, mothers with 4-5 and 9-10 years old children and mothers of firstborn and only children indicated negative effects of their work on their children. Mothers from class III families also said that their work affected their children. It was thus, found that a sizable section of working mothers were of the view that employment of women had negative effects on children. It may be inferred that lower the income of the working mothers, the more would they report adverse effect on their children. Indepth interviews with working mothers also indicated that as such mothers work has no direct effect on children. But indirectly, when children were given more responsibilities due to their mothers' work, sometimes these duties made them neglect their studies which affected their education. About half of the working mothers and most of the nonworking mothers in the sample were satisfied with the time they got to be with their children. Working and nonworking mothers from nuclear families and with younger children were more satisfied with the time they got to be with their children. But working mothers from class I families were less satisfied with the time they got to be with their children when compared with nonworking mothers from class I families. When asked about the typical negative effects on children, most of the mothers in the sample indicated that
they had less time to spend with their children, less time to help them in education, no time to take care when children became sick and had problems in the area of discipline. But mothers' responses and indepth interviews with mothers showed no dissatisfaction of children with their mothers' work outside. This only shows mothers' guilty feelings. More working mothers from joint families with older children and from class III families left home before their children left for school and never reached home before their children returned. More mothers from 20-29 years age group and class I families left after sending their children and reached home before the children. In this study majority of the working mothers made some arrangements for their children. Most of them arranged servants and some children were looked after by grandparents. In Talwar's study (1984, p. 133) only 3.8% of the employed mothers left their children under the care of domestic servants. The importance of grandmother either in the home or nearby is also indicated in Yudkin and Holme's study (1969, p.68). One-fourth of the mothers in the sample didn't arrange anybody for their children as they thought that they can manage on their own.

The Government Social Survey from Britain (1968) and the report from United States (1967) showed some differences in the percentage of mothers who left their children to look after themselves. The Government Social Survey Study found that 30.7% of the mothers of school age children working full-time made no arrangements for their 5-15 years old children on return
from school and the report from the United States showed only 8% of children under 14 were left to look after themselves. Talwar's study (1984, p. 135) indicated that out of those employed mothers who had children of the age ranging from 6-17 years, slightly more than one-third of them reported that they did not need to make arrangements for their children. When the sample was divided for the two sexes separately, more of the boys' mothers said that they didn't arrange anybody and more of the girls' mothers reported to have arranged servants. But in Yudkin and Holme's study (1969, p.67) there was no difference between the two sexes. More mothers from class I, nuclear and only child families arranged servants whereas more mothers from class III families and with more children arranged no one for their children. 13% of the mothers in this study left their children under the care of older siblings. In Talwar's study (1984, p. 132) 20.4% of the working mothers stated that the elder siblings looked after the younger ones. In Klein's study (1965, p.56) 15% of the working mothers held the same view. Nolan (1959) reported that only 8% of the working mothers left their children in the care of elder sibling. Yudkin and Holme (1969, p. 67) found a considerable number, about two-thirds, had older brothers or sisters. More than 50% of the mothers were satisfied with the arrangements made for their children. Mothers aged 40 and above, from joint families with older children and also from class I families with only children were more satisfied with their arrangements than
the other groups of mothers. More than 50% of the working mothers and almost all the nonworking mothers indicated that their children were growing normally. The working mothers belonging to joint families reported less negative effects and more positive effects on children in comparison to the working mothers belonging to nuclear families. It was possible because their children were taken care of by others in the family when the working mothers were out to work but this opportunity was not available to the children of working mothers who belonged to nuclear families. These results seem to support the conclusions of Talwar's study (1984, p.121). Working and nonworking mothers from class I families reported positive effects on their children. Working mothers with younger children reported negative effects. More mothers from nuclear families, class I families and with only children thought that their husbands were satisfied with their outside work. More mothers from joint families, 20-29 years age group and from class III families reported that their husbands objected to their work outside. It is of significance that in Kapur's study (1974) 86% of the husbands did not mind their wives being in job, whereas only 10% of them did not want their wives being employed. In Klein's study (1965) 60% of the working women reported that their husbands approved of it, 6% approved conditionally and 5% were indifferent. Kapadia (1954) found that 44.2% of the teachers interviewed favoured the idea of women's employment. Ross (1961) also found in her study that two-thirds of the men inter-
viewed favoured the idea of women planning careers. Nye (1963) also found that husbands of working women generally approved women's employment. Yudkin and Holme (1969, p. 55) say "that although a majority of husbands apparently do not actively object to their wives going out to work, there is still a long way to go before one can talk of a really full liking for such arrangement. There is a general tendency for the husbands to accept their wives going out to work as a necessity". In Detroit sample (Hoffman, 1949) 16% of working mothers reported that their husbands gave unqualified approval to their working and 19% reported that their husbands were opposed to the idea. In Gore's study (1968) of Delhi Aggarwal families, 43% of them totally rejected the idea, 24% accepted it and 33% said that women might work under special circumstances.

In case of children's satisfaction about their mothers going for work, more working mothers said that their children didn't mind their work outside. But children from nuclear families, from class III families, and with large families objected their outside employment. This may be due to shouldering of more responsibilities at home. Majority of nonworking mothers said that their husbands were satisfied with their role as housewives. More mothers of 40 and above age group from nuclear families, with younger children reported positive answer. Mothers from class III families, with more children and last-born children said that their husbands objected their staying...
at home without any outside work. But most of the nonworking mothers reported their children's positive satisfaction towards their work at home. Talwar's study (1984, p.203) indicated the family members' satisfaction on working women. She reported that less than 10% objected to their employment and almost 75% of them accepted the idea. Most of the working mothers said that their families gained from their work outside. Girls' mothers, mothers from nuclear families, mothers from class I families and with more children gave a positive response.

Mothers from indepth study also indicated their families better position due to their work outside. Working mothers gave a positive opinion of their children saying that they are independent and can shoulder responsibilities in their absence.

Indepth interviews with working mothers showed that to make up their absence in the day time, the mothers usually spent sometime with their children in the evening, playing, helping them in studies and listening about their day's activities. The mothers were able to control and settle their children's quarrels like the mothers from nonworking group.